

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 INR-07

IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 EB-08 NRC-05 DODE-00 SS-15

SP-02 PM-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 /100 W

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O R 231755Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3545

INFO DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY WASHDC

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY GERMANTOWN MD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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USEEC

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH FR

SUBJ: FRENCH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ON NUCLEAR EXPORT

POLICY DECEMBER 23 MEETING

1. THE FRENCH INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON NUCLEAR EXPORT POLICY MET FRIDAY, DEC 23, (ITS FIFTH MEETING) AT THE ELYSEE PALACE UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHP OF PRESIDENT GISCARD. THE MEETING HAD BEEN SCHEDULED FOR SEVERAL WEEKS EARLIER AND POSTPONED FOR REASONS OF OTHER PRESSING MATTERS. THIS MEETING PROVIDED THE GOF WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO PUBLICLY POST ITS VIEWS ON SPECIFIC NUCLEAR ISSUES PRIOR TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT NEXT MONTH.

2. THE ELYSEE COMMUNIQUE ON THE COUNCIL MEETING

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FOLLOWS:

A. "THE COUNCIL EXAMINED THE PROBLEMS OF FRANCE'S SUPPLY OF NATURAL URANIUM. THE COUNCIL EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH ITS LONG ESTABLISHED RELATIONS OF COOPERATION IN THIS FIELD, AND STUDIED THE NEW PERSPECTIVES OF COOPERATION WHICH COULD BE OPENED AS FRANCE'S NEEDS INCREASE. IT UNDERLINED THE NECESSITY

OF OFFERING TO DIVERSE OPERATORS THE MEANS OF
FINANCING AND GUARANTEES WITH RESPECT TO THE
FORESEEABLE EVOLUTION OF OUR (FRENCH) NEEDS AND WITH
THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE URANIUM MARKET.

B. "THE COUNCIL TOOK STOCK OF INTERNATIONAL
DISCUSSIONS TAKING PLACE IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD, NOTABLY
IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR FUEL
CYCLE EVALUATION. IN THIS REGARD, IT UNDERLINED THE
IMPORTANCE IT ATTACHES TO RESPECTING THE COMMITMENTS
UNDERTAKEN BY EACH COUNTRY PARTICIPATING IN THIS
PROGRAM, OF NOT PREJUDGING THESE RESULTS, AND OF TAKING
NO DECISION CAPABLE OF AFFECTING THE REALIZATION OF
ELECTRO-NUCLEAR PROGRAMS OF OTHER COUNTRIES.

C. "THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC CONFIRMED THE
WILLINGNESS OF FRANCE TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE
RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION OF RULES AND TECHNIQUES
PERMITTING THE HARMONIZING OF NECESSARY DEVELOPMENT OF
ELECTRO-NUCLEAR ENERGY AND THE INDISPENSABLE PREVENTION
OF THE RISKS OF PROLIFERATION AND NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS."

3. IN PROVIDING FURTHER COMMENT ON THE MEETINGS:

A. MR. JEAN-PHILIPPE LECAT, ELYSEE SPOKESMAN,
STATED THAT THE PROBLEMS OF DIVERSIFICATION OF SUPPLY
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IN URANIUM ARE SIMILAR TO THOSE WHICH APPLY TO ALL
ESSENTIAL RAW MATERIALS, FOR EXAMPLE, PETROLEUM. IT IS
A QUESTION OF HAVING, FOR URANIUM AS FOR OTHER
MATERIALS OF A STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE, HE CONTINUED,
SOURCES IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AND EXTRACTIONS BY
DIFFERENT OPERATORS (PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ENTERPRISES,

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FRENCH OR FOREIGN).

B. MR. LECAT NOTED THAT THE COUNCIL WAS PREOCCUPIED WITH THE PROBLEM OF SAFETY STOCKS, UNDERLINING HOWEVER THAT THE DURATION OF SUCH A STOCK IS DIFFICULT TO EVALUATE AT THE PRESENT TIME. BECAUSE FRANCE IS IN A PERIOD OF INCREASING CONSUMPTION. HE NOTED THAT IN THIS DOMAINE THE DIVERSIFICATION OF SUPPLY CAN BE A SUBSTITUTE TO STOCKPILING.

C. CONCERNING THE PROBLEMS "OF THE NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE", MR. LECAT SAID "THAT IT IS A QUESTION NOTABLY OF THE PROPOSITIONS OF PRESIDENT CARTER" (WHO WISHED TO LIMIT THE EXPORTATION OF FUELS FOR FEAR OF MILITARY USE.

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4. COMMENT: THE MEETING COVERED MANY ITEMS ACCORDING TO A CEA SOURCE: THE COMMUNIQUE FOCUSED ON A FEW ITEMS. THE CANADIAN-EURATOM NEGOTIATIONS HAVE PRESENTED FRANCE WITH SOME SERIOUS PROBLEMS. FRANCE WANTS TO INVEST IN MINING OPERATIONS IN CANADA BUT WANTS ASSURANCES NOW, WHEN IT PUTS UP THE MONEY, THAT THE URANIUM EXPORTED LATER WILL NOT HAVE A CANADIAN VETO ATTACHED REGARDING REPROCESSING. THE COMMUNIQUE SETS FORTH FRENCH CONCERNS AND VIEWS. THE REFERENCE TO INFCE GIVES PROMINENCE TO THE MATTER OF PARTICIPANTS NOT PREJUDGING THE RESULTS (DON'T CHANGE THE RULES OF THE GAME) AND NOT TAKING STEPS BEFORE THE END OF INFCE THAT WOULD AFFECT

THE NUCLEAR PROGRAMS OF OTHER COUNTRIES. THIS REFERENCE AGAIN POINTS TO CANADA, BUT ALSO PERTAINS TO THE MATTER OF THE US-EURATOM RENEGOTIATIONS. THE COUNCIL REVIEWED THE INFCE PROGRAM TO DATE AND THE COMMUNIQUE CONFIRMS CONTINUING FRENCH PARTICIPATION.

5. THE MEETING AND COMMUNIQUE ARE NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT NEXT MONTH; THE NUCLEAR ITEMS AND RELATED FRENCH VIEWS FOR THAT ARE TO BE CONSIDERED NEXT WEEK. THE COMMUNIQUE DOES, HOWEVER, RESTATE THE BASIS OF FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN INFCE: DON'T PREJUDGE THE RESULTS OR MAKE DECISIONS AFFECTING OTHERS BEFORE INFCE IS COMPLETED. THIS COULD BE HELD UP AS THE FRENCH RATIONALE FOR NOT RENEGOTIATING THE US-EURATOM SUPPLY AGREEMENT UNTIL AFTER INFCE AND YET THE FRENCH COULD EASILY AGREE TO "OPEN NEGOTIATIONS" AND DELAY ANY SUBSTANTIVE RENEGOTIATION UNTIL AFTER INFCE.
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